



# Comprehensive Bicycle Plan

City of New Bern, NC



end and meets Trent Boulevard again near First Street at its east end. Spencer Avenue is a low volume neighborhood street with a curbed median separating one travel lane in each direction. From visual inspection, all three of these streets appear to currently have relatively comfortable bicycling conditions.

## Recommendations

- Stripe bicycle lanes on Trent Boulevard from Spencer Avenue to First Street. There is adequate width to stripe a 7-foot parking area, a 5-foot bike lane, and a 10-foot travel lane on each side of the street. Marking a bicycle lane would also indicate that bicyclists should ride on the same side of the road in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Paved



*Current conditions on Trent Boulevard with on-street parking.*



*Trent Boulevard is wide enough to have 5-foot bicycle lanes adjacent to the 7-foot on-street parking.*

shoulders should extend farther west on Trent Road where the curb and gutter cross-section stops. Shared lane pavement markings should continue east on Pollock Street where the roadway becomes too narrow for both bicycle lanes and on-street parking.

- Continue to designate Trent Boulevard as the bicycle route in this area.
  - Trent Boulevard has the highest traffic volume of all three alternative roadways, but it is the only one with enough space to stripe bicycle lanes. The designated bicycle lanes will add to the roadway's prominence as a bicycle route, providing a visible indication that bicycles are accommodated on the roadway. In addition, because most of the east-west motor vehicle traffic in this part of the City uses Trent Boulevard, drivers that cross this road or make turns onto it may look more carefully and enter the road more cautiously than the other two low-volume parallel roads. This may create safer conditions at intersections for bicyclists. Also, if this road is a through street, cyclists will not have to stop at every intersection, thereby increasing safety and convenience. Trent Boulevard also provides access to DeGraffenried Park, but the other parallel streets do not.
  - Rhem Avenue presents difficulties for bicyclists at its west end



*Rhem Avenue (right side of photo) is a neighborhood street that intersects Trent Boulevard at a diagonal.*



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intersection with Trent Boulevard. At this location, bicyclists traveling west would need to make a long, wide left-turn across Trent Boulevard because the intersection meets Trent Boulevard at a diagonal angle.

- Spencer Avenue was not selected as a route for several reasons. Because there is not enough space for a bicycle lane, bicyclists should use the regular travel lanes. However, less experienced bicyclists may be inclined to ride closer to the doors of the parked cars when a vehicle approaches from behind, putting them in greater risk of a collision with an opening car door.



The second problem with Spencer Avenue is at its intersection with First Street. This intersection has stop signs for traffic on Spencer Avenue, but it does not have any traffic control on First Street. While this is not necessarily a problem, there is limited sight-distance approaching this intersection from the south on First Street, which could put bicyclists at risk when crossing.

- Consider the option of directing eastbound bicyclists on Rhem Avenue and westbound bicyclists on Trent

Boulevard. The most challenging section of Trent Boulevard for bicycling is likely to be immediately west of First Street. This is where Rhem Avenue rejoins Trent Boulevard. Bicyclists traveling eastbound on Trent Boulevard must be careful to avoid traffic coming from Rhem Avenue on their right. One potential solution to this problem is to provide bicycle lane space along with the turning lanes at the intersection (having the bicycle lane immediately to the left of a right-turn-only lane). Another solution is to have eastbound bicyclists use Rhem Avenue instead of Trent Boulevard. Westbound bicyclists would still use Trent Boulevard because this would avoid the intersection conflict at the west end of Rhem Avenue. Note that bicycle lanes should still be provided on both sides of Trent Boulevard, even if eastbound bicyclists are directed to use Rhem Avenue.

## 7. Country Club Road Interchange with US 70

Country Club Road is an important roadway for bicycling because it is one of five locations where bicyclists can cross US 70. It is also the most direct route for bicyclists to use to ride between Trent Woods and Downtown New Bern. This



Current conditions on the bridge over US 70.



Potential improvements to the bridge over US 70.



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roadway currently serves high volumes of high-speed traffic (approximately 8,800 vehicles use the roadway each day on the north side of US 70). It does not have bike lanes, striped shoulder space, or a shared-use path. The travel lanes are currently between 13- and 14-feet wide, which provides an opportunity to restripe the road with narrower lanes and more space for bicycles.

## Recommendations

- Narrow the travel lanes (preferably to 11 feet with five-foot striped bike lanes) on the bridge over US 70 so that shoulder bicycle lanes can be striped on both sides of the road. These new bicycle lanes can connect to bicycle facilities on the north and south sides of the bridge.
- Provide additional lighting to improve bicyclist and pedestrian visibility in the bridge area at night.
- Add 4-foot paved shoulders to Country Club Road between the south side of the US 70 interchange and Steeple Chase Drive in Trent Woods. These new paved shoulders could be used to form bicycle lanes on each side of the roadway and could connect with the existing (or widened) shoulders on Trent Woods Drive, resulting in bicycle lanes running up to Chelsea Road.
- Another alternative is to restripe Country Club Road between the north side of the US 70 interchange and Pollock Street so that it has one travel lane in each direction, a raised median with left-turn pockets (or a two-way center turn lane, though the raised median serves as a better refuge for pedestrian/bicycle crossings), and bike lanes on both sides of the road. The existing cross-section

should be wide enough to accommodate two twelve-foot lanes, two five-foot bike lanes, and a 16-foot wide plantable median. This type of “road diet” from the current four-lane, undivided roadway cross-section typically works for traffic volumes less than 15,000 vehicles per day, and often improves conditions both for bicyclists and motor vehicle drivers.

## 8. Intersection of Broad Street, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and Neuse Boulevard



*Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (left), Neuse Boulevard (right), and Broad Street (behind photographer) meet to form this complex intersection.*

This is an important intersection for bicycle access because the three intersecting roadways are main arteries to three different parts of the City. Broad Street provides connectivity to Downtown New Bern; Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard serves the southwest part of the City, and Neuse Boulevard is the main commercial roadway in the northwest section of the City. The intersection of these three roadways has been constructed without shoulders or bike lanes. In addition, the multi-lane configuration of the roadways approaching the intersection makes it difficult for bicyclists to turn left in heavy traffic.



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## Recommendations

- Post high-visibility yellow “Share the Road” and other warning signs to increase driver awareness of bicycles in the vicinity of the intersection.
- Provide additional lighting to improve bicyclist and pedestrian visibility at night.
- Add a 4-foot paved shoulder to the south side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. This paved shoulder would be an extension of the existing wide shoulder that extends southwest along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to the southwest of this intersection. It would connect to the proposed bicycle lanes on Broad Street.
- Construct a paved shoulder and a sidewalk on the north side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. This side of the street serves several retail businesses, so the new shoulder and sidewalk would make it easier for bicyclists and pedestrians to access these destinations.
- Add a left-turn bicycle lane to the eastbound turning lanes on Neuse Boulevard. There is enough space to add a left-turn bicycle lane to the immediate left of the right-turn only lane



*The turning lanes on eastbound Neuse Boulevard at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard could be narrowed to provide space for a left-turn bicycle lane.*

on this approach to the intersection.

Dashed lines should be added through the intersection to show cyclists the best path to follow to connect to the bicycle lanes on Broad Street.

- Restripe travel lanes on Broad Street to provide a four-foot shoulder bicycle lane on both sides of the street. By narrowing the existing travel lanes to 11-feet wide, bicycle lanes can be provided along the entire length of the roadway between this intersection and Front Street and Neuse Boulevard. While sidewalk bicycling is not encouraged, it provides an alternative method for some less experienced bicyclists to ride along these roadways. In addition, the new sidewalk will improve conditions for the significant number of pedestrians that walk along these roadways (as evidenced by the worn dirt paths beside the roadways).
- Perform a more detailed evaluation of the intersection to determine the most appropriate places to add crosswalks for pedestrians and less-experienced bicyclists who do not feel comfortable making left turns along with motor vehicle traffic. This study should also examine the best way to safely accommodate bicyclists that wish to turn left from westbound Broad Street onto southwest-bound Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (it is likely that this movement would use the new pedestrian crossings).



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## 9. Downtown Neighborhood Loop



*The streets of the neighborhood on the northwest side of Downtown New Bern are narrow with relatively low traffic volumes. This makes them very good for bicycling.*

The neighborhood on the northwest side of the downtown area features modest homes and narrow streets. Because these streets are very narrow, traffic speeds are generally low enough to have bicyclists share the road with motor vehicles. This historic neighborhood also has a significant amount of low- to moderate-income households, so a significant population here may rely on bicycling for transportation. Therefore, it is essential to determine the best routes for bicycle access in this neighborhood.

### Recommendations

- Designate a bicycle route through the neighborhood to serve trips between the neighborhood and Downtown New Bern. This route could use Simmons Street, Washington Street, Garden Street, Main Street, George Street, Broad Street, and First Avenue. From First Street, the route could turn west on Trent Boulevard and utilize the recommended bicycle lanes until reaching Simmons Street.
- Designate a bicycle route to connect neighborhoods west of Simmons Street. This route would include Grace Avenue, Pinetree Drive, Lori Drive, Elizabeth Avenue, Sunset Road, Cherry Tree

Drive, and Neuse Boulevard. This alignment is described in **Chapter 4** and is shown in **Figure 4.6**.

## 10. Bicycle Route Alternatives North of Downtown New Bern

Many bicyclists would like to bicycle north from the downtown area through the neighborhoods along the Neuse River. A bicycle route in this area would help show neighborhood residents how to bicycle to Downtown New Bern and also show recreational cyclists how to navigate north along the river. North Craven Street, Front Street, Pasteur Street, National Avenue, George Street, and Bern Street were considered for designation as bicycle routes. Currently, North Craven Street is designated as the bicycle route in this area. It might not be the most attractive route for recreational cycling, however, or the most direct route for neighborhood residents to use to reach Downtown New Bern.



*East Front Street should be designated as a link in the "Riverfront Bicycle Route" that would highlight both the Neuse and Trent Riverfronts.*

### Recommendations

- Designate East Front Street as a link in the recommended "Riverfront Bicycle Route." This bicycle route would be oriented toward recreational bicycle touring around the City. This roadway is



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